

(CMS), determine that Obamacare is causing a net employment loss among small businesses or caused small group health care insurance premiums to rise. Comptroller General would be required to conduct this study every year and the employer mandate would be delayed for every negative finding. In addition, should the Comptroller General or CMS fail to submit a report as specified by this bill, the employer mandate will not apply for the following calendar year.

It is time for the Administration to be honest with the American people. It is time to protect our working class men and women who are going to feel the most negative impacts of Obamacare. The Certify It Act will prove once and for all that Obamacare causes job loss for small business and increases costs to small business health care. Mr. Speaker, it is time to protect the people and increase jobs.

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2014

SPEECH OF

HON. BILL FLORES

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 21, 2014

Mr. FLORES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4031, The Department of Veterans Affairs Management Accountability Act of 2014. This bill would give the Secretary of Veterans Affairs (VA) complete authority to fire or demote senior leaders based on performance.

This bill originated from an increasing amount of evidence supporting a lack of management accountability in the department's efforts to curb the disability benefits backlog. Now with the devastating discovery of a growing number of preventable deaths at VA medical centers across the country, this legislation has become more essential.

The department is failing to do its primary job, which is to provide the best health care and benefit services to our veterans. Sadly, the recent reports of mismanagement at VA medical centers only add to the growing list of problems that have plagued the VA. It is time that underperforming senior leaders are held accountable and punished for their poor performance, as opposed to the status quo of ignoring mismanagement practices and rewarding misconduct. Our nation's heroes deserve better.

With the passage of H.R. 4031, this bill would allow for the VA secretary to cut through the mounds of red tape to discipline and remove senior leaders. As an original cosponsor of the bill, I was pleased to see the House take action and pass it with an overwhelming majority. By giving the secretary the direct authority to reprimand leaders it sends a clear message that mismanagement will no longer be tolerated.

The culture at the VA has clearly lost its way and is in need of leadership that can bring back the focus towards its core values of Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect and Excellence. These core values have been ignored for too long. It is time to put the interests of America's veterans ahead of the interests of federal bureaucrats so that we keep our promises to the brave men and women

who have protected so much for our freedom and liberty.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE NICARAGUAN CULTURAL COMMITTEE
"JOSE DE LA CRUZ MENA"

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 22, 2014

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Nicaraguan Cultural Committee "Jose de la Cruz Mena," and salute them for the wonderful cultural efforts they are producing for the residents of the City of Los Angeles.

Founded in 2010, the Nicaraguan Cultural Committee "Jose de la Cruz Mena" is a small but dedicated organization committed to raising awareness on the traditions and customs of Nicaraguans who reside in the City of Los Angeles.

Since music is fundamental to Nicaraguan culture and spirit, the committee opted to be named after Jose de la Cruz Mena, a pioneering artist who was the first to introduce classical music to Central America. Although he suffered from various illnesses that left him blind at the age of 22 and led to a premature death at the age of 33, de la Cruz Mena's special talent allowed him to participate in composing the Nicaraguan national anthem. The committee is honoring his legacy by sharing his story and music with Angelinos.

To increase appreciation for Nicaraguan music and culture, the committee successfully encouraged the City of Los Angeles and the State of California to officially recognize May 3rd as "Dia del Nicaraguense" (Nicaraguan Day). The Nicaraguan Cultural Committee celebrated this distinct recognition on May 4 by hosting the first Nicaraguan Folklore Festival in Pico Union where many Americans of Nicaraguan descent have lived since the 1980s. The festival highlighted special Nicaraguan traditions and featured artisan crafts from Nicaragua. To foster cultural exchange, the committee plans to host the Nicaraguan Folklore Festival annually.

I wish the Nicaraguan Cultural Committee "Jose de la Cruz Mena" continued success in its efforts to preserve and highlight Nicaraguan traditions!

IN MEMORY OF NEVIN WHITESIDE,
JR.

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 22, 2014

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, this month Lexington County recognized the service of Nevin Whiteside, Jr., as a proud Navy veteran of the Korean War. The following obituary was provided by Caughman-Harmon funeral Home, Lexington Chapel.

Funeral services for Nevin "Neb" William Whiteside, Jr., 84, of Lexington, will be held at 2:00 p.m. Friday, May 2, 2014 at St. Peter's Lutheran Church, with interment in the church cemetery. The family will receive friends on Thursday, May 1, 2014 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00

p.m. at Caughman-Harmon Funeral Home, Lexington Chapel. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to St. Peter's Lutheran Church, 1130 St. Peter's Church Rd., Lexington, SC 29072. Mr. Whiteside was born November 28, 1929 in Leesville, SC and passed away on April 30, 2014. He was the son of the late Nevin William Whiteside and Bertie Earle Whiteside. Mr. Whiteside served our country in the U.S. Navy during the Korean War. He retired from Kenan Transportation. He was a member of St. Peter's Lutheran Church, VFW and Lexington Masonic Lodge 152. He loved to ride his Harley-Davidson and enjoyed working in the yard and cleaning his car. Mr. Whiteside is survived by his wife, Barbara "Bobbie" Sox Whiteside, of Lexington; sons, Stan and Wayne Whiteside of Lexington; daughter, Kim (Tim) French of Lexington; grandchildren, Lauren, Andrew, and Brandon Whiteside, Ashley (Bower) Butler and Malia and Devin French; great-grandchildren, Reece and Paxton Butler; sister, Doris Goff of Saluda and man's best friend "Bandit", (Poppy's Lil' Buddy). He is predeceased by his parents and his brother Horace Whiteside.

HONORING THE LIFE OF A MINNESOTA LEGEND: CONGRESSMAN
JAMES L. OBERSTAR

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 22, 2014

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, on May 3, 2014, our former House colleague and dear friend, Chairman Jim Oberstar, passed away. Congressman Oberstar served Minnesota and the families of the 8th Congressional District from 1975 to 2011, including four years as chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. Prior to being elected, Jim served in the U.S. House for eleven years as a senior staff member on the Public Works Committee.

When I arrived in Congress in 2001, Jim Oberstar was the "dean" of our Minnesota congressional delegation. He was like a big brother to me. A brilliant legislator and a profoundly gifted man, Jim was also a very kind man, a true gentleman with a huge heart and a hearty laugh.

When I think of Jim and the ten years we served together, I remember a man who loved his family and made sure I always saw the latest photos of his grandchildren. He loved his work as a national leader and true expert on transportation and infrastructure issues. And, Jim Oberstar loved Minnesota and representing northern Minnesota's families in the House of Representatives.

Throughout his career Jim's commitment to improving America's transportation system saved thousands of lives, kept millions of Americans on the job, and strengthened Minnesota's and our nation's economy. During his tenure as chairman of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Jim Oberstar was one of the most powerful men in America. He moved legislation and with his work on American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, Jim Oberstar ensured millions of Americans stayed on the job and thousands of infrastructure projects were completed across our country.